

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services
DORS Pre-Employment Transition Services
Fact Sheet

In July 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law. WIOA replaces the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. WIOA requires vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to set aside at least 15% of their federal funds to provide “pre-employment transition services” (PETS) specifically to “Students with Disabilities.”

A “Student with a Disability” is defined as an individual who:

- is still enrolled in secondary school and has not exited, graduated, or withdrawn;
- is at least 14 years old but less than 22;
- and has a disability (i.e., receives services under an IEP or 504 plan, or has a disability for purposes of section 504).

The limited pre-employment transition services (PETS) that may be provided, based on identified need and the availability of services, include:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, experiences outside of the traditional school setting, and/or internships
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy

High school students with disabilities interested in participating in a pre-employment transition service listed above may contact their local Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) office directly.

High school students with significant disabilities interested in applying for traditional vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, may do so during the fall of their next-to-last year of school. Pre-employment transition services are also available to those students who have been determined eligible for VR services as well as those currently receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) through VR.

High school students on the DORS wait list for VR services are eligible to participate in pre-employment transition services while they wait.

For additional information or to refer for services, please visit our website at www.dors.maryland.gov.